

REMARKS

Claims 1-22 are pending and stand rejected. Applicant amends claims 1, 6, 9, 12, 16, and 18. For the reasons provided below, Applicant submits that the pending claims as amended are allowable over the cited references. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and favorable action in this case.

Objections

Specification

The Office Action Summary indicated that the specification is objected to by the Examiner. However, no specific objection is noted in the Detailed Action. Applicant requests that the Examiner confirm that the specification is acceptable or indicate the specific objection to the specification.

Claims

Claim 6, 9, and 16 are objected to. Applicant amends claims 6, 9, and 16 to provide proper antecedent basis and request that these objections be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102

Applicant respectfully request reconsideration of these rejections in light of the following remarks.

Zupanick '322

Claims 1-8 and 10-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being anticipated by U.S. patent application publication No. 2003/0075322 ("Zupanick '322"). Independent claim 1 recites "a second articulated well bore formed off of the second well bore, the second articulated well bore intersecting the first well bore and coupled to a second pattern formed in the subterranean zone through the second articulated well bore." Independent claims 12, 18, and 21 include similar limitations. Zupanick '322 discloses a first articulated well bore coupled to a first

drainage pattern and a second articulated well bore coupled to a second drainage pattern. As can be seen most clearly in FIG. 5A (a plan of view of the system shown in FIG. 5B), Zupanick '322 discloses bore 72 intersecting the second pattern rather than the second well bore. Accordingly, claims 1, 12, 18, and 21 are not anticipated by Zupanick '322. Claims 2-11, 13-17, 19, 20 and 22 depend directly or indirectly from one of claims 1, 12, 18, and 21 and are not anticipated by Zupanick '322 for at least the same reasons. Applicant respectfully requests these rejections be withdrawn.

Harmon

Claims 12, 16, and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,754,808 ("Harmon"). Claim 12 recites a substantially horizontal well bore pattern for the subterranean zone. Harmon does not disclose a substantially horizontal well bore pattern for the subterranean zone. Harmon discloses a common fracture network with fractures rather horizontal well bores. Accordingly, claim 12 is not anticipated by Harmon. Claims 16 and 17 depend from claim 12 and are not anticipated by Harmon for at least the same reasons. Applicant respectfully requests these rejections be withdrawn.

Zupanick '340

Claims 1-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. patent application publication No. 2005/0087340 ("Zupanick '340"). As amended, independent claim 1 recites "a second articulated well bore formed off of the second well bore, the second articulated well bore intersecting and extending through the first well bore and coupled to a second pattern formed in the subterranean zone through the second articulated well bore." As amended, independent claim 12 and 18 include similar limitations. As can be seen most clearly in Fig. 11, Zupanick '340 discloses articulated well bores extending between well bores from which the articulated well bores kick off. Accordingly, claims 1, 12, and 18 are not anticipated by Zupanick '340. Claims 2-11, 13-17, 19, and 20 depend directly or indirectly from one of claims 1, 12, and 18 and are not anticipated by Zupanick '322 for at least the same reasons.

Claim 21 recites "kicking off the second well bore above the subterranean formation to form a second pattern in the subterranean formation, the second pattern intersecting the cavity of the first well bore and operable to transport fluids from the subterranean zone to the first well bore for production to the surface through the first well bore." Zupanik '340 discloses the articulated well bores kicking off well bores that do not have cavities 22. Accordingly, claim 21 is not anticipated by Zupanick '340. Claim 22 depends from claim 21 and is not anticipated by Zupanick '340 for at least the same reasons. Applicant respectfully requests these rejections be withdrawn.

Conclusion

In view of the above, and for other reasons clearly apparent, Applicant respectfully submits that the Application is in condition for allowance, and requests such a Notice. If the present Application is not allowed and/or if one or more of the rejections is maintained or made final, Applicant hereby requests a telephone conference with the Examiner and further requests that the Examiner contact the undersigned attorney to schedule a telephone conference.

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Serial No. : 10/715,300
Filed : November 17, 2003
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Attorney's Docket No.: 17601-039001 / 067083.0215

Applicant has enclosed a new Information Disclosure Statement and a check in the amount of \$180.00 in payment of the late submission fee of §1.17(p). No other fees are believed due. However, please apply any deficiencies or any other required fees or any credits to deposit account 06-1050, referencing the attorney docket number shown above.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: January 11, 2005

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